

NEWSRelease

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

3040 Biddle Road • Medford, Oregon 97504 • <http://www.blm.gov/or/medford>

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BLM Begins Plan for New Wilderness

Medford, Ore. Today, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the start the planning process of the newly created Soda Mountain Wilderness Area in southern Oregon. The Soda Mountain Wilderness was created in March 2009 under the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 (Public Law No. 111-011). The law specifically designated approximately 24,100 acres within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument as wilderness. The scoping phase for this portion of the planning effort will run until May 24, 2010.

The Soda Mountain Wilderness encompasses the rich biological and geological diversity in the mountains southeast of Ashland, Oregon. The new wilderness lies on the south side of the Medford District. The heart of the wilderness is the 5,720-foot high Boccord Point where the great basin meets three mountain ranges. The older Klamath Range comes up from the south while the much younger Siskiyou Range extends from the west. Jutting up from the north is the very young Cascade Range.

“The designation of Soda Mountain Wilderness within the Cascade- Siskiyou National monument is going to change how some of these areas have been traditionally been used,” said BLM Medford District Manager Tim Reuwsaat. Human activities will generally be restricted to non-motorized / non-mechanized recreation, backpacking, hunting, fishing, horseback-riding, scientific research, and other non-invasive activities.

The BLM will begin developing a plan aimed at managing the Soda Mountain Wilderness area based on the principles of non-degradation of wilderness characteristics. This planning effort will address how to best provide for the long-term protection, use, and enjoyment of the Soda Mountain Wilderness.

To help the BLM with this planning effort, the public is invited to a **May 13, 2010**, public meeting at Bellview Grange, Ashland Oregon. There will be two sessions one from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and one from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Bellview Grange
1050 Tolman Creek Road
Ashland, Oregon 97520

This year also marks the 10th Anniversary of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and the National Landscape Conservation System.

The BLM's National Landscape Conservation System contains some of the West's most spectacular landscapes. It includes nearly 27 million acres of National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic Trails. The National Landscape Conservation System works to conserve the essential fabric of the West, while offering exceptional opportunities for recreation, solitude, wildlife viewing, exploring history, and scientific research.

Additional information about the National Landscape Conservation System is available online at:

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/blm_special_areas/NLCS.html

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Additional information about the Soda Mountain Wilderness Area is available online at:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/wilderness2.php>

Additional Information about Cascade-Siskiyou National monument is available online at:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/csnm/>

Additional Information about the scoping process is available at:

http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/files/SMW_Scoping_Letter.pdf

About the BLM: The BLM manages more land – 253 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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